



CITY HALL PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
PAT Meeting
City Hall Boards and Commissions Room
May 1, 2006, 3:00 – 4:30 PM

AGENDA WITH MEETING NOTES

Present

PAT Members: Peggy Dreisinger, Laura Inveen, Neil Lukas, Bud Parker, Al Poole, Amit Ranade

Park Staff: Cheryl Fraser, Cathy Tuttle, B.J. Brooks, Victoria Schoenburg

Others: Jim Brewer - King County Council, Theresa Neylon / Kenichi Nakano – Nakano Associates

Summary of Last PAT Meeting, *Cheryl Fraser, Parks South Operations Manager*

Two schematic alternatives were presented. Cheryl reviewed the questionnaire. Most of the responses were from King County employees. The top issues were safety and cleanliness. They hope for a place where they can safely have lunch and engage in passive recreation.

Center City Parks Initiative, *B.J. Brooks, Parks Deputy Superintendent*

B.J. Brooks described how City Hall Park Improvements fit into the Center City Parks Initiative.

- Center City Parks Initiative will focus on programming and security of 25 downtown parks (Counterbalance Park in Queen Anne was just added to the list of downtown parks).
- Park Board would like each Center City park project returned to the Board for a briefing and recommendation to implementation.
- Parks will step up security for City Hall Park -- working with MID ambassador.
- Parks will ask for funds for collaborative maintenance.
- Parks has focused on security for all Center City parks.
- Parks needs to assess when larger capital outlays are needed for upgrades and when day to day costs for smaller but still significant items such as benches.
- Parks ideally would like a partnership with a non-profit for special events.
- Occidental Park was the first of the Center City Parks in construction.

Design Assumptions to Schematic Design, *Cathy Tuttle, Parks Planner*

Cathy reviewed the Vision Statement developed by the PAT and explained how the Vision Statement informed design assumptions that were developed into the new schematic plan. Cathy also reviewed all meetings that have held to date on City Hall Park.

Schematic Design, *Nakano Associates*

Kenichi Nakano presented a new schematic design. All design options, including the new design, can be reviewed on the project website at: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/maintenance/CityHallPark.htm>

- Nakano was pleased that the design had moved from bubble designs to a complete schematic.
- Design has 50% hardscape / vegetation based on comments by Preservation Board.

- Belvedere in the north is at same entry level as KC building– creates flat area for stage, vendor, coffee shop, indoor/outdoor. Belvedere hides maintenance area but expresses the façade of County building.
- There are many fixed benches planned but additional temporary furniture would also be ideal and could be stored within building or parking garage
- Central plaza is 40'x80' – large enough for tent, arts festival. Plaza is flanked with lawn areas.
- Design saved significant anchor trees but removes eight trees.
- Design focuses on historical elements rather than play area.
- Dilling Way is closed but is still paved.
- Wrought iron gates bring sense of safety and security.

PAT comments and questions on design

- Jim Brewer: Is belvedere at same level as Jefferson and the stage? Answer – yes.
- Peggy Dressinger: Could Parks consider a seasonal flower area in SE? Answer – yes.
- Trees need a 2:1 replacement of trees – replace with street trees of a certain caliper. Removing 8 trees including 2 determined unhealthy Answer – will need 16 replacement trees.
- Neil Lukas: Removing trees is brilliant. Benches can go outside of fences. Fencing should not enclose park completely – gates could be open at certain hours. Parks could elect to close lawn areas for more flexible governance. Toshiro-Kaplan residents have 12-14 dogs could off-leash be considered here? Another possibility of SW corner is a small, half court for basketball. Could park have small concrete tables? Answer – yes to tables. Will consider other ideas at future meetings.
- Dressinger: Park design is elegant. Opportunities for use – gates are a good tool for defining space. Can design upright remaining trees? Answer – Possible although much more night light will also provide light.
- Brewer: Park needs restrooms. Where would they go? Answer – possibly at SE corner. ADA route has to stay open. Restroom could be within the fence.
- Lukas: What about the Prefontaine Fountain? Answer –Preservation Board said to keep fountain in place. Water feature could be added. Prefontaine Fountain needed a smaller, above ground pump.
- Brewer: Given the climate, what about covered seating? Answer – Interesting idea, perhaps a temporary tent.
- Lukas: Covered area would create far more problems than it would solve.
- Victoria Schoenberg: Plenty of downtown parks used without cover – Freeway, Steinbruek, Westlake. Occidental covering is being removed.
- Lukas: Design is an improvement. It changes what is visible, the fences control the site. formal, little areas define different areas and uses.
- B.J. Brooks: Likes ideas of tying historic piece and various historic activities within park
- Bud Parker: King County Executive – wants less grass and higher fence
- Dressinger: Park Rangers will provide security in downtown parks.
- Brooks: There is a partnership with Parks/MID/Police/HSD. There will be a service provider in addition to a downtown Ranger. Parks is working on revised Parks Code of conduct. Parks can help with the solution but only a coalition will solve this problem. Can park have signs that direct folks about where to go to get food?
- Parker: Restroom needs to be in the design – does everyone agree? Answer – yes.
- Al Poole: Human Services Department intends to open a new facility across the street from City Hall Park on May 17 that will have feeding programs and bathrooms. The Men's Feeding Program will be open from 7 a.m. – 9 p.m and serve 80-100 people. The bathroom will be open to the public from 7am to 7pm. The purpose of the program is to connect

people who are ready for housing to housing advisors, as well as provide mental health and drug treatment referral.

- Lukas: It is important to have access to a bathroom without going thru security. Possible changes to SE corner include a learning/play area, restroom, decorative planting, basketball, dog park – what's supposed to go in this corner? Answer – Parks will explore possible options. Nakano will make overlays to show relative sizes.
- Amit Ranade: Parks needs to bring attention to the SE corner – a dog park could draw people deliberately to that area. Will the same people go to the park after it is redesigned? Is that a fair assumption or will demographics change? Answer – They will shift but still many transients will use park.
- Brewer: No dog park should be considered. Can there be less grass. Answer – Parks and County will meet before the next PAT meeting and consider options.
- Poole: We use a port-o-let that can serve 400/day for outdoor meal service, but it needs to be serviced daily
- Cheryl Fraser: CHP toilet serviced 2x/week in winter, 3x/week peak.
- Brooks: MID and Rangers could be housed in a small building in park. What does county bring to bear? Consider an organization like FareStart to operate a vending/bathroom building that could serve the Ranger program.

Next Steps

- **PAT meeting June 5** to review comments to the schematic design from King County, the Pioneer Square Preservation Board, and from a community meeting. The PAT will also make recommendations on the location of possible park active areas such as basketball or interactive historic elements as well as the location of a park bathroom.
- Seattle Design Commission May 4
- Pioneer Square Preservation Board Architectural Review Committee May 10
- **Public Workshop #3 May 31**
- **Board of Park Commissioners Briefing / Public Hearing June 8**
- Board of Park Commissioners Recommendation June 22
- City Council briefing tbd